

# Council Conduct With Boards and Commissions

**“We rarely find that people have good sense unless they agree with us.”**

**--Francois, Duc de La Rochefoucauld**

The City has established several Boards and Commissions as a means of gathering more community input. Citizens who serve on Boards and Commissions become more involved in government and serve as advisors to the City Council. They are a valuable resource to the City's leadership and should be treated with appreciation and respect.

- **If attending a Board or Commission meeting, be careful to only express personal opinions**

Councilmembers may attend any Board or Commission meeting, which are always open to any member of the public. However, they should be sensitive to the way their participation – especially if it is on behalf of an individual, business or developer -- could be viewed as unfairly affecting the process. Any public comments by a Councilmember at a Board or Commission meeting should be clearly made as individual opinion and not a representation of the feelings of the entire City Council.

- **Limit contact with Board and Commission members to questions of clarification**

It is inappropriate for a Councilmember to contact a Board or Commission member to lobby on behalf of an individual, business, or developer. It is acceptable for Councilmembers to contact Board or Commission members in order to clarify a position taken by the Board or Commission.

- **Remember that Boards and Commissions serve the community, not individual Councilmembers**

The City Council appoints individuals to serve on Boards and Commissions, and it is the responsibility of Boards and Commissions to follow policy established by the Council. But Board and Commission members do not report to individual Councilmembers, nor should Councilmembers feel they have the power or right to threaten Board and Commission members with removal if they disagree about an issue. Appointment and re-appointment to a Board or Commission should be based on such criteria as expertise, ability to work with staff and the public, and commitment to fulfilling official duties. A Board or Commission appointment should not be used as a political “reward.”

- **Be respectful of diverse opinions**

A primary role of Boards and Commissions is to represent many points of view in the community and to provide the Council with advice based on a full spectrum of concerns and perspectives. Councilmembers may have a closer working relationship with some individuals serving on Boards and Commissions, but must be fair and respectful of all citizens serving on Boards and Commissions.

- **Keep political support away from public forums**

Board and Commission members may offer political support to a Councilmember, but not in a public forum while conducting official duties. Conversely, Councilmembers may support Board and Commission members who are running for office, but not in an official forum in their capacity as a Councilmember.

- **Inappropriate behavior can lead to removal**

Inappropriate behavior by a Board or Commission member should be noted to the Mayor, and the Mayor should counsel the offending member. If inappropriate behavior continues, the Mayor should bring the situation to the attention of the Council and the individual is subject to removal from the Board or Commission.